

TOWN MANAGER EVALUATION

FY2012

For the purposes of this document, the evaluation terms shall be defined as:

Commendable = Performance surpassing reasonable expectations

Satisfactory = Performance meeting reasonable expectations

Needs improvement = Performance below reasonable expectations, with improvement likely

Unsatisfactory = Performance below reasonable expectations, with improvement unlikely

Unable to judge = Insufficient information available for evaluation (Please explain)

Select Board Member: ALISA V. BREWER

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY	Commendable	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory	Unable to Judge	COMMENTS
<u>FISCAL MANAGEMENT</u>						
Annual Expectations						
1. Plans and organizes the preparation of an annual budget.	X					No drama is good.
2. Prepares budget in conformance with the Select Board's Budget Policy Guidelines memo.	X					
3. Plans, organizes and administers the adopted budget within approved revenues and expenditures.	X					
FY12 Goal						
4. (FY12 Goal #1) The Town Manager shall develop specific recommendations for consideration by the Select Board to address the ongoing revenue challenge, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. generating new revenue; b. reducing expenses through efficiencies in Town structure and service delivery, including regionalization of services where appropriate; c. negotiating contracts through the collective bargaining process that are reflective of the community's capability and willingness to support, and mindful of the stagnant economy and conservative projections for the next few years; d. pursuing an increased economic development profile to increase the tax base and reduce the burden on residential property taxpayers. 	X					BID kick off particularly exciting and new approach for Amherst. Moving retired teachers and their dependents from GIC to more effectively managed Amherst-Pelham Health Claims Trust plans was/will be particularly well-executed and will benefit those teachers, their dependents, and the taxpayers.
<u>RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BOARD AND TOWN MEETING</u>						

Annual Expectations						
5. Makes professional recommendations to the Board on items requiring Board action.		X				
6. Interprets and executes the intent of Board policy.		X				Select Board has provided little policy to be interpreted or executed. Need some “clean up” of various old (prior to any current members of Select Board or current Town Manager/Select Board office staff) policy documents floating around so everyone knows a policy exists. Select Board budget goals endorsed. Understood that opening the Seasonal Shelter a few days early had to be a priority with the freak October snowstorm, despite the challenges in doing so.
7. Maintains a professional, impartial and effective working relationship with the Board.	X					May seem obvious, but it’s not the norm everywhere that the Town Manager has no apparent favoritism toward any individual or subset of the Board.
8. Presents to Town Meeting with thorough preparation and clear communication.	X					
FY12 Goal						
9. (FY12 Goal #6) The Town Manager shall keep the Select Board fully informed by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> responding to and initiating improved communication efforts; recognizing that any issue or change that directly or significantly impacts the community falls within the Select Board’s authority to provide feedback; allowing the Select Board opportunity to provide feedback on policy/practice initiatives and changes before implementation; involving the Select Board in the determination of collective bargaining strategies for the current contract process, and keeping us updated on its progress; ensuring that all members of the Select Board 		X				Generally not a problem, but some recent lack of communication around changes in road work priorities including Lincoln Ave and Harkness Rd sewer extension; things Select Board thought were clear sometimes many months later turn out to be altered for a variety of reasons, but not always effectively communicated to Select Board as they happen.

are aware of anything significant before it appears in the newspaper.						
<u>LONG RANGE PLANNING</u>						
Annual Expectations						
10. Maintains a knowledge of new technologies, systems and methods, etc. in relation to Town services.		X				
FY12 Goals						
11. (FY12 Goal #7) The Town Manager shall provide the Select Board with a detailed assessment of Town-owned buildings regarding their current use, and anticipated future benefit and liability. He will make recommendations on whether or not it is in the Town's best interest to maintain ownership of each one. If any recommendations are to repurpose a building or not maintain its ownership, he will suggest how best to proceed.				X		No apparent progress has been made in the past four years (note this was one of the previous Town Manager's goals), although some data collection done by the shared Town/School facility manager. Given that it is always difficult to find time to do everything, this item has slipped, & it is in fact the most appropriate item to have allowed to slip. Unsatisfactory because every enterprise should have a full grasp of its holdings. Significant progress needs to be made in the coming year, well prior to Annual Town Meeting 2013.
12. (FY12 Goal #8) The Town Manager shall help Amherst become a greener, more sustainable community by initiating and advocating for new "green" efforts and programs, and he shall inform the Select Board and the community about these efforts and their results.	X					Excellent work supporting all the moving pieces to achieve Green Community status!
13. (FY12 Goal #9) The Town Manager shall create, through consultation with each department's staff, a recommended staffing plan that suggests the optimal number and types of positions in each department to best address current service levels and key needs. This will provide a framework for prioritizing recommendations for future hiring. Such future recommendations should address the full cost of each position, including post-		X				Some progress made. Continued refinement of Select Board expectations of this goal likely to result in continued progress that will provide a valuable working document more easily referenced than the somewhat different type of details normally provided in the detailed budget book.

employment benefits.						
<u>STAFF AND PERSONNEL RELATIONS</u>						
Annual Expectations						
14. Models sound personnel procedures and practices in oversight of human resources function.		X				Great expectations for new HR Director, especially as concerns remain from the last two Town Managers' service around the ability of all employees, union members or not, to avail themselves of appropriate supports to address concerns with their employment related to their relationships with supervisors and/or co-workers.
15. Leads, directs and develops Town staff.		X				Clarity around professional development opportunities may be helpful.
16. Develops good staff morale and loyalty to the Town.		X				Important to work with HR Director to tease out why some remaining pockets of unhappiness. Staff morale remains difficult for the Select Board to judge, as our interactions are -- quite appropriately -- generally self-limited to interactions with department heads rather than other department members. Other challenges include the even-lower response rate to the Select Board-provided Anonymous Staff Questionnaires with few comments, while general human nature suggests that more people complain than compliment in any setting.
17. Recruits and assigns the best available personnel in terms of their competencies.	X					Amazing hires in Deb Radway (HR), Rob Morra (Building Comm), & Jon Thompson (Code Enforce)
18. Leads the negotiations of labor contracts representing Town interests and Board guidelines.	X					Exhibits very good understanding of avoiding unnecessary contentiousness, and of critical nature of frequent, clear communication with school counterparts. Excellent achievement in concluding collective bargaining negotiations with all four municipal unions through June 30, 2013.

						Formed Labor Management Committee with DPW/AFSCME to work on pay scale Compensation Study; results expected in first half of 2013.
FY12 Goals						
19. (FY12 Goal #4) The Town Manager shall make high staff morale a priority. Efforts shall include: a. increasing communication between himself and staff at all levels, in order to inform, engage and solicit feedback; b. encouraging a workplace culture of civility, mentoring and receptivity to new ideas and innovations for improved service delivery.		X				Need to develop process for recognition to include both relatively small improvements (not just the “big” ideas), and to ensure staff at all levels -- not just the department heads -- are being publicly recognized for their contributions. Continued sharing of the Select Board's goals for the Town Manager with all staff is a terrific idea that can be leveraged as support for ongoing collaborative efforts.
20. (FY12 Goal #5) The Town Manager shall conduct an assessment of the Town’s Human Resources needs and capabilities, in order to determine how well we are recruiting, hiring, retaining and supporting Town staff, and how aligned we are with best practices in the human resources field. The Town Manager shall inform the Select Board about the assessment results and his plan to address any necessary changes.			X			A long standing issue, well prior to the current Town Manager, with continued refinement of what we need to accomplish. Significant progress has not yet been made, but now expected by early 2013.
<u>COMMUNITY and INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS</u>						
Annual Expectations						
21. Ensures that an attitude and feeling of helpfulness, courtesy and sensitivity to public perception exists in employees coming in contact with the public.		X				This may not be the ideal placement for this comment, but it seems appropriate given the example set by the Town Manager and the culture it fosters: a significant weakness in timeliness of some responses to inquiries and requests from both staff and the community at large. Before this Town Manager, a lack of any response to an inquiry was a problem in at least

						one department (inspections). We no longer hear that concern with that department, but we do hear it regarding the Town Manager himself. Marked “satisfactory” rather than “needs improvement” as 1. progress has been made and continues, and 2. not a huge problem relative to the potential of people feeling badly treated or never getting a fully-formed answer -- they just feel ignored when they do not receive timely acknowledgement of their initial concern.
22. Represents the Town to media as Chief Public Relations spokesperson on Town government issues.	X					Cultural shift to use of more frequent press releases posted to the Town website continues.
23. Maintains awareness of developments and plans in other jurisdictions, including the colleges and university, that may relate to or affect Town government.	X					Worked with UMass on their Campus Master Plan and supported staff in doing so (not just the Town Manager but also Town staff-UMass staff collaboration). Has not been faced with a time of particularly intense negotiations with Amherst College, Hampshire College, or University of Massachusetts, but has not lose sight of importance of those relationships & works to keep all channels open -- which is critically important as all three change leaders within this past/coming year! (Hampshire: Hexter->Gerber Fried->Lash; Amherst: Marx->Call->Martin; UMass-Amherst: Holub->Subswammy; UMass system: Wilson->Caret). Given circumstances, did appropriate one-year extension of UMass Strategic Partnership agreement. Works well with surrounding communities.
FY12 Goals						

24. (FY12 Goal #2) The Town Manager shall continue to strengthen relationships with UMass and the Colleges, for concrete progress in areas that improve the community's quality of life by:		X				Looking forward to continued improvements with new Code Enforcement position in place for all of FY13. New role as chair of PVTA Advisory Board brings fresh approach to the Five College area public transportation challenges.
a. mitigating the impacts of a significant student population: on neighborhoods, on demand for public safety resources, on parking and traffic issues, and so forth; b. compensating for the significant amount of non-taxable property; c. pursuing issues of mutual benefit to the Town and the academic institutions		X				Actively engaging and seeking support necessarily go beyond just listening and reflecting, and some people will inevitably not be happy with his support of initiatives they do not like.
<u>General Expectations</u>						
26. Feel free to comment on strengths or weaknesses in any of the following areas: Professionalism Community spirit Leadership Defends conviction under pressure Enthusiasm Openness to differing views/new information Accessibility Resourcefulness Setting priorities Advocacy with State and Federal Government Communication style Crisis management Listening skills Responsiveness Public speaking Facilities management						Confident, calm, professional manner. Listens carefully and is open to differing views and new information. Continues to effectively advocate with State and Federal Government. An informative yet concise public speaker at Town Meeting and elsewhere. Disagrees without being disagreeable and will not "glad-hand" just to get people to go away. His unexpected injury/time away from the office made it clear he had excellent people and systems in place to function well without his presence.
<u>OTHER COMMENTS</u>						
27. If you are willing to share any additional						

information, insight, or experience relevant to this evaluation, please do so here.						
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The Town Manager's June 18, 2012 memo "**Self-Evaluation & FY 12 Town Manager Performance Goals – Progress Report**" contains much useful detailed information that is mostly not repeated here.

Voting at Town Meeting: As an elected or ex-officio Town Meeting member every year since 1999, I've often heard/seen comments wondering why the current (and just prior) Town Manager exercise(d) their votes at Town Meeting, when the long-serving Town Manager we had in 1999 generally did not do so. I have always responded that I am actually very comfortable with the Town Manager voting at Town Meeting. It is entirely appropriate for the Town Manager to advocate for his position via both verbal and written reports and actual voting. If the Town Manager consistently voted against the Select Board majority, that would be a point of information in the Select Board goals and the policy relationship, but having a record of the Town Manager's vote is far preferable to the pretense of the Town Manager not having a public position – because it's simply unrealistic to imagine the

Town Manager doesn't have a position. As I've stated before: if we don't believe the Town Manager should be allowed to vote at Town Meeting, the Amherst Town Government Act should be changed.

Anonymous **Staff Questionnaire for Town Manager Evaluation** form: submissions received: in 2009, (43) submitted, (2) of which included the respondent's name; I forgot to note how many in 2010; in 2011, (43) submitted, (2) of which included the respondent's name (not a typo); in 2012, (30) submitted, (1) of which included the respondent's name. Is the much lower rate of submission a reflection of fewer staff (overall number of staff having decreased since 2009), an increase in satisfaction, no compelling need to complain, or disengagement because participation seems futile?

Anonymous **Staff Questionnaire for Town Manager Evaluation** form: written comments: Roughly the same small number of staff continue to express unhappiness that Town staff not physically located in Town Hall do not see the Town Manager with enough frequency; this could surely be easily addressed. Some indications that professional development opportunities are not widely known and/or offered, although across the (30) submissions there was wide variety in responses to that question. "Answers your questions, returns phone calls and replies to e-mails in a timely manner" is noticeable for it's variability. Some frustrations expressed regarding compensation for the highest paid individuals with individual employment contracts vs. compensation for bargaining unit members vs. compensation for the remaining non-unionized workers. It is hard for me to imagine staff morale being lower than it was with the previous Town Manager, but there were a couple of comments that this is so; I wonder how much of this can be separated from low staff morale throughout the region, state, nation, planet due to the current stagnant economy. Overall significantly positive ratings for the question "Advocates for staff in dealings with the public, elected officials, the press and others," yet a few strong comments that the Town Manager takes the credit for himself rather than on behalf of the hard work of staff. This has not been my experience at all; I have never experienced John representing "I did this, I did that" but always instead truly that "we" accomplished something. His June 18, 2012 "**Self-Evaluation & FY12 Town Manager Performance Goals -- Progress Report**" also indicates this clearly.

Anonymous **Staff Questionnaire for Town Manager Evaluation** form: "Unable to Judge" evaluation term indicates what? Enough "Unable to Judge" rankings have been returned to the Select Board over the approximately five years the Staff Questionnaire for Town Manager Evaluation form has been in use that I continue to wonder whether there are questions other than the fifteen on the current form that would provide more useful insights to the staff's view of the Town Manager's performance. While we'd expect to see a few such marks on any individual form (given that no one

individual sees every aspect of an individual's employment), there have always been returned forms where either the entire form, or the majority of the form, is marked "Unable to Judge." Surely it is of no benefit to employee morale to feel that is the sum of their input. This year we did re-word and re-order some of the questions. Still, perhaps relatively soon after this year's Town Manager Evaluation is completed, the Select Board could do a mailing to the same population of staff asking for their input on appropriate questions/different wording for the form; we have not done this yet. Perhaps sending staff the actual Select Board evaluation form (already available on the Town website, and The Republican newspaper also published it at MassLive.com this year) would inspire specific feedback? The new Human Resources Director may also have suggestions for this aspect of our process. The wide variation in responses -- among a very limited number of responses -- causes me to wonder if a departmental rather than "at large" response might be solicited. I am uncomfortable with emphasizing this evaluation process challenge without providing a clear solution, yet continuing down this same variation of the 360 feedback path without some significant change in process does not seem particularly fruitful in either improving the Town Manager's performance or in improving our assessment of that performance. ~END~ Alisa V. Brewer 08-15-12